

TWIGGY'S ZERO EMISSION AMBITION

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WA mining billionaire Andrew Forrest has predicted an "almost violent" transition to green energy in the years ahead, which he said would defy most forecasts on global decarbonisation.

Fortescue's chairman made the comments yesterday after setting an ambitious target for the iron ore miner to be carbon neutral by 2030, 10 years earlier than it originally forecast in 2020.

The mining giant said net-zero emissions would be achieved by developing green electricity, green hydrogen and green ammonia projects in Aus-

tralia through its wholly owned subsidiary Fortescue Future Industries.

Ultimately green energy would power the company's trucks, drill rigs, trains and ships and it would also look to manufacture green steel using hydrogen instead of coal.

The company has set five short-term goals to be completed by June 30, as part of its 2030 target. If successful, the plan will remove the emissions of one billion litres of diesel fuel a year from the company's operations.

ENERGY EXPORTER

The ambitious target comes just four months after Mr Forrest foreshadowed plans for Fortes-

cue to become a heavyweight of the global energy sector, of comparable size to US oil and gas giant Chevron by focusing on hydrogen and ammonia.

Mr Forrest said yesterday Fortescue would join the two "missing links" in the climate change battle by delivering both the supply of, and demand for, green hydrogen. He said green hydrogen and direct green electricity had the potential to eliminate fossil fuels from supply chains.

"Once established, these advances will also substantially reduce Fortescue's operating costs," he said.

EXISTING EFFORTS

The company has already com-

mitted \$US700 million to its Pilbara Energy Connect program which adds solar generation and battery storage to the energy mix for its stationary power needs as well as an integrated transmission network that will allow additional renewable energy to be installed in future.

Chief executive Elizabeth Gaines also noted yesterday Fortescue expected to make a final investment decision this year on plans to export green hydrogen and ammonia from a plant to be built at Tasmania's Bell Bay.

RIVAL SPRAY

In a veiled swipe at Fortescue's bigger rivals BHP and Rio Tinto, Mr Forrest dismissed the

relevance of companies setting targets for the so-called scope 3 emissions of their customers.

"All these scope 3 emissions platitudes might give people warm and fuzzies but achieve nothing," he said.

"If you want to change an industry, you need provide them a commercial alternative that is carbon free."

Mr Forrest also claimed \$1.3 billion in taxpayers money had been "blown-up" trying to find a solution for oil and gas producers to enter the green hydrogen industry through carbon sequestration, of which he doubted the technical and commercial viability.

RESPONSIBLE MOVE

Mr Forrest sought yesterday to ease investors' fears that the company's heightened green focus could detract it from its iron ore business.

"While our green energy and industry initiatives may one day significantly out-scale our iron ore business due to the global demand for renewable energy, our commitment to iron ore and resources globally remains infeasible," he said.

Fortescue said independent verification would be employed to monitor the company's march towards carbon neutrality. It would also incorporate the carbon emissions targets into its formal remuneration structure,

including short and long-term staff incentives across the company.

OFFSET OPTIONS

Mr Forrest said he would not rule out using carbon offsets to achieve net-zero emissions by 2030. "We are working really hard to limit its use," he said.

"As Bill Gates says there's no point in thinking you're helping the carbon footprint of the planet by planting a tree where a tree would be growing anyway."

GREEN REACTION

WA Conservation Council executive director Piers Verstegen welcomed Fortescue's move to bring its net zero emissions tar-

get forward, but said he believed the company could meet its goal even sooner because renewable energy was becoming commercially competitive.

He said moving to net-zero emissions would not only be economically viable but also beneficial to the company because commodity markets were becoming increasingly discerning and would soon place a premium on iron ore that was carbon neutral.

However, Mr Verstegen said he was concerned about Fortescue's plans for a 165MW gas-fired power station at its Solomon Hub operation, which would produce 670,000 tonnes of emissions a year.

INITIAL RENEWABLE TARGETS

Develop and trial a ship design powered by green ammonia

Test large battery technology in haul trucks

Trial hydrogen fuel cell power in drill rigs

Trial technology to run locomotives on green ammonia

Trials to use renewable energy to convert iron ore to green iron